

“Do You Spray?” Apple IPM Poster

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George Lamont, NYS Horticultural Society

James Allen and David McClurg, New York Apple Association

Project location(s): This education and communication project was located in the major apple-growing regions of New York State, along Lake Ontario, in the Hudson Valley, and in the Lake Champlain region. Use of the poster is applicable throughout the Northeastern apple growing regions of the USA.

Abstract:

A poster addressing the question of whether or not fruit has been sprayed was developed to inform the general public. Apple growers across New York requested this poster to help them inform people who visit their farm markets to purchase fruit and also to inform their farm workers about how this question can be answered proactively. In its first release in the Hudson Valley region, over half of the 150 apple growers attending the Winter Fruit School purchased a copy of the poster for their farm. To date the poster has been displayed in a variety of locations from farm markets to grower business offices.

Background and justification:

As wholesale markets shrink or disappear for growers in NYS, many are developing roadside markets, farm markets, agri-tourism, and direct marketing opportunities in order to stay in business. This is especially poignant in the Hudson Valley and Long Island agricultural regions. A poster addressing whether fruit has been sprayed was developed in response to the increasing need of direct-marketing growers to answer this question when posed by consumers.

When Carroll contacted the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) educators in fruit to acquaint herself with their programs and IPM needs, Mike Fargione, Extension Agent III for tree fruit in the Hudson Valley Commercial Fruit Program, immediately suggested the development of a poster to address the public about spraying. Specifically, he suggested the poster answer the question often posed by consumers at roadside markets, "Has this been sprayed?" because this was a major concern of growers in his region. In further discussions Carroll had with CCE educators and many direct-marketing apple growers and diversified fruit growers across New

York, she learned that most thought such a poster would be a great idea and have great utility and impact. To paraphrase the theme of conversations Carroll had with growers:

“A brochure would be nice, wouldn't it?” Carroll asked. “Because we could include more information on spraying: why spray, with what, when?”

“No”, growers responded, “people don't read those things. They won't spend time reading something that long. And they certainly won't read it while they are at my farm stand which is where they need the answer to the question.”

Growers wanted a poster to address a question that most market stands are getting from the public. A poster establishes a teachable moment that can lend itself to addressing a controversial topic openly. The apple poster informs a dialogue about spraying and IPM practices that helps determine the answer: “Only when we need to.”

Objectives:

Produce a poster for farm markets and businesses addressing whether fruit has been sprayed.

Procedures:

Submitted two project planning grids to the Communications Team for simple posters to be utilized in farm market stands by fruit growers to address (1) has this been sprayed? and (2) what are pesticides? Solicited and received feedback reviews of text concepts for the posters from project cooperators. Determined that it would be best to produce just one poster answering the question “Do you spray?”

An initial B/W mock version of the poster was distributed among apple growers for feedback and suggestions. This was also distributed among project cooperators (listed above) for additional feedback. Text for the poster was greatly reduced to form the message in a nutshell and teachable moment concepts. Three main concepts were kept:

1. Question and answer.
 - ⌚ “Do you spray?”
 - ⌚ “Only when we need to.”
2. Bullet list of IPM practices in orchards.
 - ⌚ planting varieties that are more pest-proof
 - ⌚ pruning trees to limit fire blight and other diseases
 - ⌚ mowing the orchard to stop weeds, voles and rabbits
 - ⌚ giving the orchard checkups for mites and insects
 - ⌚ using scientific forecasts to calculate the risks of crop loss
 - ⌚ dealing with pests only when IPM shows that you need to – and then, using the safest methods
3. Rationale for protecting crops and using IPM.
 - ⌚ Rots, blights, insects and mites can ruin trees and fruit.
 - ⌚ But using IPM – cultural practices, pest forecasts, and frequent orchard checkups – we can keep our fruit trees healthy plus protect you and the environment.

A major byline was developed to tie the piece together, “Balancing Farms, Food, and Nature”.

The apple poster graphic design was completed in 2003. A photo taken in an apple orchard, featuring a mother and child talking to an apple grower, was used along with an illustration of a beautiful, red apple. The three concepts and byline were designed for positioning on the poster.

The apple poster was featured at the Hudson Valley Winter Fruit School, the Northeastern NY Winter Fruit School (Table 1), and at the Northeast Crop Consultants Conference in February and March of 2004. Pricing for the poster was set at approximately \$2.00. A “Do You Spray?” apple IPM poster pricing and marketing agreement was developed with Andrew Sich, CCE The Resource Center. Ordering information was posted on The Resource Center and in the NYS IPM web pages. Jim Allen, Executive Director of the NY Apple Association, agreed to feature an announcement about the Apple IPM poster in the October issue of The Core Report.

Table 1. “Do you spray?” Apple IPM Poster presentations and exhibits in 2004.

Date	Title	Location	Audience	#
2/25	Introduced the Apple IPM Poster	Kingston, NY; HV Winter Fruit School	Apple growers, CCE, faculty, industry	150
2/26	IPM Exhibit – featured the Apple IPM Poster	Lake George, NY; NE NY Winter Fruit School	Apple growers, CCE, faculty, industry	50

Results and discussion:

In its first release in the Hudson Valley region, over half of the 150 apple growers attending the Winter Fruit School purchased a copy of the poster for their farm. To date the poster has been displayed in a variety of locations from farm markets to grower business offices. Information on the poster is available on the NYS IPM website at <http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/fruits.html> and The Resource Center website at <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/store/customer/product.php?productid=16727&cat=&page=1>.

